

The real story of Anne Bonny

Numerous versions of the story of Anne Bonny and Mary Read have been told over the past three centuries, but few have considered them from an actual historical perspective. Most of them simply **play up**¹ to the sensational and titillating aspects of women serving aboard an eighteenth century pirate ship. [...]

Defying her father, Anne Cormac **elopes**² with James Bonny and the two of them run away to Nassau. [...] While in Nassau, Anne meets Calico Jack Rackham, captain of the pirate ship Ranger. She disguises herself in men's clothing and serves on board ship as a pirate. One of the ships they plunder is a Dutch vessel bound for the West Indies and Jack recruits an English soldier by the name of Mark (Mary) Read, who put up a good fight, into the Ranger's crew. [...]

The origin of these stories comes from the source document, A General History of the Pyrates by Captain Charles Johnson, 1724. The parts about Anne Bonny and Mary Read don't seem to follow any chronology and are really just a series of anecdotal tales that the author admits that he picked up from the witnesses at their **trial**³. These reports were, essentially, nothing more than gossip which had most likely been heavily embellished as they were passed around before Johnson even heard the versions of them that he **penned**⁴.

annebonnyandmaryread.com

1. focus on
2. run away to marry
3. where they were judged (they avoided hanging by claiming to be pregnant)
4. wrote

1. Type of document: ☐ short story ☐ novel ☐ biography

2. Information about Anne Bonny before she was a pirate:

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3. Information about Anne Bonny as a pirate:

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4. Information about Mary Read as a pirate:

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5. Do you think the information in this document are reliable? **Explain.**

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